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ABSTRACT

Examining the trends and issues in vocational education, this speech focuses on the historical basis for vocational education, the current situation in vocational education, vocational education in the 1980's, the role of vocational education in economic development, and research related to these topics. Issues which are currently being discussed in congress, industry, and education are listed along with current problems affecting the success of vocational education in the area of transition from school to work. The implications for vocational education research are presented in the following four questions: (1) What economic impact does vocational education have? (2) Does the training one receives in vocational education make a smoother transition from school to work? (3) How well are current vocational education programs doing? and (4) Can vocational education help solve problems relating to welfare, crime, health, urban and rural development. Included is a question and answer series relating to the Bakke decision, unemployment, inflation, the youth employment and development project, competency-based testing, career centers, and area vocational-technical schools. (LRA)

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Occasional Paper No. 46

TRENDS AND ISSUES IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

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- Operating information systems and services
- Conducting leadership development and training programs

PREFACE

The National Center for Research in Vocational Education welcomes Mr. Reginald E. Petty's lecture on "Trends and Issues in Vocational Education: Implications for Vocational Education Research and Development."

Mr. Petty discusses the relationship between vocational education and economic development and presents possible solutions for youth unemployment. Additionally, he addresses the role vocational education can play in making students' transitions from school to work more effective.

A member of the National Advisory Council on Vocational Education since 1971, Mr. Petty has served in many capacities. Among these are monitoring Council projects, advising the Executive Director, directing staff research, aiding and expanding Council liaison with other governmental agencies, and assisting in Council decision making.

Additionally, he has served as director of staff training and research for a Job Corps Center, consultant to a community action program, Assistant Director of the Manpower Training Corporation of America, and Associate Director of Education for the General Learning Corporation.

In 1974 Mr. Petty was appointed an advisee to the government on the food crisis in Upper Volta, West Africa, where he returned for three years to serve as Peace Corps Director.

On behalf of the National Center for Research in Vocational Education and the Ohio State University, I take pleasure in presenting Mr. Reginald E. Petty and his lecture, "Trends and Issues in Vocational Education: Implications for Vocational Education Research and Development."

Robert E. Taylor
Executive Director
The National Center for Research
in Vocational Education

TRENDS AND ISSUES IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

I am extremely pleased to note the variety of disciplines represented here today to hear a speech on vocational education. In the past, there has been quite a dichotomy between "vocational education" and "academic education"—a belief that the two seldom communicated with each other. To me, this lack of communication has been partially responsible for the public's viewing academic education as not being responsive to the real needs of society, and vocational education as being too narrowly focused. Neither of those accusations is totally true, but the public perception results in bond issues not passing and taxes being cut. I could spend the afternoon discussing the need for closer coordination between so-called academic education and vocational education, but that is not why I was invited here today.

Speaking on the topic, "Trends and Issues in Vocational Education: Implications for Vocational Education Research and Development," is an easy assignment. Much change is taking place in vocational education at all levels, and all such trends and issues are fodder for researchers. I had difficulty narrowing the focus to those that I consider most important and most in need of your research skills.

Since we have an integrated group today, I'll begin by discussing briefly the historic basis for vocational education as we see it today, then make a few comments on our current situation and vocational education in the 1980s, and conclude by relating your role as researchers to the above topics.

What It Is

Vocational education has always denoted work-oriented education—in its earlier years, rather narrowly limited to training in the skills of manual trades. With technological advances and growth in the service-oriented industries, it has expanded to include a wide variety of occupations. Concomitant with this diversification has come the realization among educators that vocational education must be a complete education, that it must encompass not only work preparation, but also life preparation for a democratic society which sees some kind of gainful employment constituting a large segment of the life span of every citizen.

Although under our Constitution the states are independent of the federal government in the determination of policies concerning the structure and function of programs in vocational education, federal funding has exerted an influence by prescribing the programs and activities that may receive federal support. It may be helpful in establishing what vocational education is now, and what it will be in the 1980s, to look briefly at where it has come from. We might be inclined to think that it was the present women's movement for an Equal Rights Amendment that first advanced a position against sex discrimination in vocational education, but as early as 1907 the National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education stated that vocational education programs should be "open to all: sex, creed, color, or nationality should not debar anyone."

The "NSPIE," a professional group including persons from nearly every walk of life, had the expressed purpose of securing federal aid to vocational education. Its work, from 1906 to 1917, strongly influenced the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917. At this time, "NSPIE" changed its name to the National Society for Vocational Education, and in 1925 to the American Vocational Association. It has had a strong influence on the evolving role of vocational education. Federal interest in vocational education was evident in the Commission on National and Vocational Education appointed in 1914 by President Wilson, in the Panel of Consultants on Vocational Education appointed by President Kennedy in 1961, in the Advisory Council on Vocational Education provided for in the Vocational Education Act of 1963, and in the National Advisory Council on Vocational Education, established together with the State Advisory Councils on Vocational Education in the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968.

Although career education, as a formal designation, is of comparatively recent origin, some of its basic principles under the title of vocational education were expressed in the 1968 report, *Vocational Education: The Bridge Between Man and His Work*, which reads:

> Vocational education is not a separate discipline within education . . . it cannot be meaningfully limited to the skills necessary for a particular occupation. It is more appropriately defined as all of those aspects of educational experience which help a person to discover his talents, to relate them to the world of work, to choose an occupation, and to refine his talents and use them successfully in employment . . . some type of formal occupational preparation must be part of every educational experience . . . there is no longer room for any dichotomy between intellectual competence and manipulative skills, and, therefore, between academic and vocational education.

Title 1, Part A, Section 108, of the 1968 Amendments gives a very broad definition of vocational education and related or support services, including programs "designed to prepare individuals for gainful employment as semi-skilled, or skilled workers, or technicians, or subprofessionals in recognized occupations, and in new and emerging occupations, or to prepare individuals for enrollment in advanced technical education programs." The only exclusion is "any program to prepare individuals for employment in occupations which the commissioner determines, and specifies by regulation, to be generally considered professional, or which requires a baccalaureate, or higher, degree."

Under the influence of state and national legislation, of professional educators at all levels, and of social and economic factors, vocational education has developed secondary, postsecondary, and adult programs, and is currently offering programs in seven major instructional fields: agriculture, distribution, health, occupational home economics, office occupations, trades and industry, and technical, with a total of 128 subcategories identified by the U.S. Office of Education. Recently added are cluster programs, which emphasize basic skills in groups of related occupations.

Other changes brought about by federal incentive funding include special programs to provide vocational education for the disadvantaged and the handicapped, cooperative and work-study programs, and joint action with CETA manpower programs. The *Manpower Report of the President*, April 1975, cites illustrations of such joint action:

> Using both CETA Section 112, supplemental vocational education funds, and CETA Title 1 basic grant monies, prime sponsors have developed agreements for purchase of occupational training in vocational education institutions.

Vocational Education and Career Education

In the early 1970s, the U.S. Commissioner of Education, Sidney P. Marland (now president of the College Entrance Examination Board) introduced and promoted the concept of career

education. He presented "the general outlines of a national career education theme before the annual meeting of the National Association of Secondary School Principals in . . . the early months of 1971 . . . and in the following spring to the Council of Chief State School Officers." He did not, at that time, or until April 1973, "lay out a concrete federal definition of career education."

Subsequently, the U.S. Office of Education published *An Introduction to Career Education: A USOE Policy Paper,* written by Dr. Kenneth B. Hoyt, Associate Commissioner, Office of Career Education. This paper gives us a generic definition of career education: "The totality of experiences through which one learns about, and prepares to engage in, work as a part of his or her way of living."

In September 1974, the National Advisory Council on Vocational Education (NACVE) issued, as its eighth report, *A National Policy on Career Education.* This report, while endorsing the concept of career education as a "universal necessity, requiring the integration of all our educational resources," including among its recommendations the following:

> That the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, in initiating new legislative proposals, maintain a separate funding system for career education . . . and that policymakers and legislators recognize that career education and vocational education are not synonymous.

In the 1980s

In a report prepared for the National Advisory Council on Vocational Education's Project Baseline, these recommendations are repeated with projections into the future. Although most vocational educators recognize that vocational and career education are not synonymous, they consider vocational education to be an integral part of career education. In fact, from all appearances, the leadership for developing and installing career education across the country has been drawn largely from the vocational education community. Many academic educators are becoming more deeply involved in the development. With their involvement, it is anticipated that the old dichotomy between academic and vocational education will be removed from American education, and that education will begin preparing students for vocations, as well as avocations.

Who is Involved

At present there are approximately 15 million vocational education students in America. Until a few years ago, only those directly involved in vocational education seemed concerned about the education or training needs of these students. Presently, because of the decrease in jobs available to college graduates, the projections that 80 percent of the future jobs will not require a college degree, the existence of CETA, and many other reasons, vocational education is being discussed by many varied groups such as the United States Conference of Mayors, the National Governors Association, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the Chamber of Commerce, the National Education Association, and so on. And this is as it should be. Providing good vocational training is everyone's problem, and everyone should be involved in the decision-making processes.

Expenditures

The Congress of the United States and the various state legislatures are involved in the funding of vocational education programs and services. Total funding has increased from $2.7 billion in 1972, to $3.4 billion in 1974, to about $6 billion in 1979. The ratio of state to federal funding has

increased from 4.71 state dollars for each federal dollar in 1972, to ten state dollars for each federal dollar in 1978. A breakdown of expenditures by purpose shows that the largest outlays are for secondary programs, the next largest for postsecondary, and the smallest for adult. Secondary expenditures were $1.8 billion in 1972, $2.2 billion in 1974, and were projected to reach $4.1 billion in 1979. Postsecondary expenditures were $707 million in 1972, $981 million in 1974, and are expected to reach $1.8 billion in 1979. Adult program expenditures were $196 million in 1972, $258 million in 1974, and are expected to reach $518 million in 1979. Programs for the disadvantaged made total expenditures of $296 million in 1972, $306 million in 1974, and are expected to spend $600 million in 1979. Programs for the handicapped expended $67.7 million in 1972, $78.7 million in 1974, and are expected to spend $205 million in 1979.

Teachers

The total number of teachers in vocational education programs was 235,658 in 1972, 266,220 in 1974, and is expected to reach 396,000 in 1979. Percentage distributions for 1974 show the largest percentage—29.3— for teachers in trade and industrial programs, and the smallest—5.9—in technical programs and programs in agriculture.

Guidance Staff

Guidance counselors constitute an important professional group, directly involved in vocational counseling and job placement programs. U.S. Office of Education statistics include counselors among teachers, so no breakdown in numbers is possible. However, vocational guidance is listed among the items in a table of total expenditures by function, and shows a notable increase in recent years. The total amount expended for vocational guidance in 1972 was $89.8 million, $115 million in 1974, and is expected to reach $255 million in 1979.

These statistics show that progress in the development of vocational education policy and service has taken place in large measure during the 1970s. Trends indicate further progress in the 1980s, the ultimate goal being achievement of vocational education for life, for every student who is in need of, or could benefit from it.

Among the people served, and the type of service given, there is need for great improvement in meeting the needs of minorities, women, the otherwise disadvantaged, and the handicapped. I also believe there is need for the acceptance by the educational community of student job placement and follow-up programs, as services for which each secondary school should be held accountable.

As previously stated there are many trends and issues that could be discussed. The two which I deem most important are the relationship of economic development to vocational education and the problems in making the transition from school to work. Other issues will surface as these two are discussed, but I have intentionally left out any discussion of the research that needs to be done and is being done within the field of vocational education. Most of you here are knowledgeable in this area, and it is my belief that vocational education research needs to be refocused to issues broader than curriculum development and to ways to do a better job of what we do. This is not to say that continued research to improve the field is not needed. Such is certainly not the case but if vocational education is to survive as a discipline—and I believe that its survival is critical to education in general—it must address the relevancy of vocational education to larger issues in our society, i.e., unemployment, economic development, and so on.

Role of Vocational Education in U.S. Economic Development

A few months ago Roman Pucinski presented the National Advisory Council on Vocational Education's testimony on CETA reauthorization to the House and Senate. He observed that President Carter recently announced that the U.S. had reached a $2 trillion gross national product. He predicted that in just 120 months, we will double that figure to $4 trillion. In ten years, we will have doubled that figure that it took us 200 years to reach. By 1985, we will need 17 million workers for new jobs caused by expansion of the economy, and 45 million other replacement workers. We are talking about 62 million jobs in the next seven years. "But the hard-core unemployed," said Pucinski, "will not benefit one iota from this tremendous growth" unless we provide them education and training which will permit them to be part of that future.

In 1977 alone, according to this January's *Economic Report of the President,* more than 4 million new jobs were generated. Employment in manufacturing grew 4 percent, an increase of 762,000 jobs. Construction employment provided 359,000 new jobs. Service industries provided an increase of 2 million jobs. Despite this improvement in the economy and the growth of new jobs, the black unemployment rate remained unchanged at 13.4 percent, compared with an overall rate of 6.4 percent. The rate for black teenagers rose from 36.6 percent to 38.3 percent. The report speculates that many black youth are not counted in these tabulations, and that the true rate of black teenage unemployment may be closer to 57 percent, instead of 38 percent.

The figures are equally tragic for Hispanics and Indians. If vocational education is to have an impact on this situation—and it cannot in good conscience turn away from these problems—it must reach out to groups—and individuals—to demonstrate that vocational education is a valid option. Most minority groups still view vocational education as a track system designed to keep them down. They view it as second best, and they aspire for better. We know differently, and we must work aggressively to change this persistent negative image of vocational education. No one else is going to do it for us.

A year and a half ago, the National Advisory Council on Vocational Education sponsored the Bicentennial Conference on the Future of Vocational Education. The purpose was to have outsiders take an objective look at vocational education and the needs for the future. Carol Gibson, Education Director for the National Urban League, spoke on the implications of the future participation of minorities and women in vocational education. She pointed out that minorities have a strong belief in the ability of education to provide the definitive route out of second-class citizenship. But they continue to debate the Booker T. Washington–W.E.B. Dubois positions on whether that education should be academic or technical. The tendency has been to favor the Dubois argument for academic education. But obviously, it is not an either-or proposition. Opportunities in our economic system are mushrooming in the new high technology fields that require technical training. While advanced degrees and the professions are highly desirable goals for the minorities, opportunities in the new technologies should not be viewed as demeaning, or second-class. The auto mechanic of tomorrow will have to read and comprehend professional manuals at the same level of competency as the doctor or lawyer, in order to keep abreast in the field. Minority group leaders, as Gibson said, must begin to understand that this training can be achieved in vocational programs at the secondary and postsecondary levels.

Calvin Dupree pointed out some of the same problems to the Bicentennial Conference when he spoke on the future vocational education needs of Native Americans. He said that many Indians were prejudiced against nonacademic learning, since it was based on the assumption that they were capable of no other. He said: "The present popularity of professional courses (especially law

courses) among Native American students at universities shows a backlash resulting from 200 years of being told that Indians work well with their hands. The successful graduates . . . have been proud to prove that Indians can work well with their heads, too. But Indians, along with the general public, need re-educating regarding vocational education. The dichotomy of hands vs. heads must be dispelled . . . ."

The negative image of vocational education among minorities is confirmed by a study completed just last month. It was a survey of 1,250 black leaders on attitudes toward vocational education. The respondents were a broadly-based cross-sample of black leaders at the national, state, and local levels, including elected officials, legislators, educators, employers, and civic leaders.

The general findings of the survey are as follows:

- What is the attitude of black leaders toward vocational education?

The attitudes of the black leaders toward vocational training differ from their attitude and image of vocational education programs, especially programs at the high school level. The black leaders express strong support for programs that train people to get jobs in advanced occupations and for programs that provide a solid work experience. When asked to provide a profile of vocational education programs by rating matched pairs of positive and negative statements (gives useless vs. relevant education), the image of vocational education programs is far more negative than positive. The negative image of vocational education holds when black students and white students are attending the program.

Their attitude and image of the administration, operation, and effect of some vocational education programs on black students— and to some extent on whites—is that vocational education programs limit the employment and leadership potential of the student more than some alternative types of job training programs.

Current Problems Affecting the Success of Vocational Education: Transition from School To Work

Schools

In the past, schools were asked simply to communicate basic skills of reading, math, English, social studies, history, a smattering of art, music, and physical education, some home economics, foreign languages, industrial arts, and some vocational education. Later, driver education, programs for adults, special programs for the disadvantaged, Title I, ESEA, and handicapped were added. In the period from 1963-68 a tremendous increase in vocational training was mandated, and a myriad of special programs was added, such as Head Start, Upward Bound, and so on. Parents and students were given a larger role in the operation of the schools through advisory groups. MDTA, and then CETA, came on the horizon, and schools were asked to play a role in providing skill training for unemployed youth and adults, and to modify their programs to fit the needs of these new populations. The youth legislation which Bob Taggart discussed was added to the schools' responsibilities.

All of the new roles were being placed on top of the traditional roles at the same time that there was a a taxpayers' revolt regarding any type of bond issue, including education. Schools were being accused of being the cause of everything, from failure to teach basic skills to the increase in crime and narcotic use, the breakup of the family, insensitivity to community needs, and so on. The drop-out rate was increasing; statistics began to show a decrease in academic achievement from grade school through college; and last but not least, schools were accused of not preparing students for the world of work.

A major question relevant to our topic today is: What realistically can be expected of schools, and are we expecting too much? Now we seem to expect the schools to become heavily involved in economic development, to involve business and labor in their operations, and to find a solution to the problem of transition from school to work.

Work

Work and careers cannot, and should not, be separated from other aspects of individuals' lives. On the contrary, the evidence is that more and more people see work, not as a separate activity, but rather as an integral part of their total lifestyles. Work and careers should not be viewed as isolated portions of human development. Human attitudes, values, aspirations, and expectations are not neatly categorized into various lifestyle categories, or work skills; and intellectual talents are not turned on and off depending on the particular places in which individuals find themselves. American workers are not a monolith. They do not necessarily feel and think about work in a singular manner. A variety of factors, such as age, sex, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and familial composition, influence work aspirations, work expectations, and job satisfaction. There are, however, certain generalizations which can be made about American workers and those preparing to enter the work force:

1. Work continues to occupy a central place in the lives of most Americans.

2. There is little, if any, indication of a decline in the importance attributed to work. If anything, the old Protestant ethic appears to have been invigorated by a growing desire to work in order to become something, other than a means to an end.

3. Many Americans do experience a certain discrepancy between work expectations and job realities.

4. Growing numbers of Americans are shifting primary concern from issues of salary and wages to matters of quality of work.

5. Prevailing economic and employment conditions influence how people view work and the assessment they make of current work activity.

As for the future, there seems to be little reason to expect a shift away from the traditions and trends already noted. What we can anticipate, I believe, is a growing expectation on the part of American workers that work opportunities be more plentiful; that the work setting be more responsive to the physical, psychological, and health needs of the individual; that work structures and settings be more flexible and more in tune with varying lifestyles; and that workers be more actively involved in decisions which will affect their performance and needs.

The growing expectation will be that the quality of life goals is as important to work as it is to other dimensions of an individual's life. Concern with improving the conditions and characteristics of work does not imply a desire to escape work responsibilities. Times have changed, but the great majority of Americans—be they young or older, affluent or poor, male or female– would prefer work to welfare. There are also sufficient data which show that thousands upon thousands of individuals who are eligible are not on welfare rolls. Nor is there any reason to believe that the poor or the young are less committed to work ethic than are affluent adults.

Having laid what I hope is a satisfactory basis for understanding the separate complexities of vocational education, schools, and work, I would like to discuss some of the difficulties in relating the three to the real world. And for the purposes of my talk today, I will focus on youth, primarily 16-to-24-year-olds, which is where the major problem lies. I will not repeat statistics that we already know concerning the high unemployment rate in this group, especially the high rate for minority youth (40 to 50 percent), and for women and the handicapped.

In researching this topic, I found major consensus in the following areas that tend to exacerbate the problem:

1. Employers are increasingly hesitant to hire 16-to-20-year-olds.

2. The Post-war baby boom is now in that 16-20-year-old age group.

3. Large numbers of women are entering the labor force.

4. Large numbers of students (up to 50 percent and even higher in some places) are leaving school without basic reading or math skills.

5. The private sector is not able to provide sufficient jobs for those currently seeking work.

6. Many young workers consider themselves in jobs for which they are overqualified.

7. No one really has a fix on just how many students are actually seeking permanent jobs or part-time jobs, of the total number of unemployed.

8. While education is fully institutionalized, I believe that work, including youth's work, comes under free enterprise.

9. A quote from Eli Ginsberg:

> Let's remember that young people develop at different rates between the ages of 16 and 24, and we therefore need more flexibility to cope with those who drop out of school early, but who want to come back later on as well as other patterns of mixing study, training and work. My own view, influenced by my own children, is that adolescence now ends at 30: so we need a lot of elbow room in the system.

There are obviously many other factors that one could relate, but others tend to be more controversial. For the sake of time I have chosen not to discuss those issues, but to refer you to a book entitled, *From School to Work: Improving the Transition,* published by the U.S Government Printing Office for the National Commission for Manpower Policy.

I would like to move now to some possible solutions to the problem. It is hard to justify, from a community viewpoint, the abruptness with which young people, regardless of their demonstrated responsibility, or lack of it, are removed from a situation in which they are virtually wards of the community, to one in which they are totally on their own. I believe that the whole school system needs to be loosened up. "The school system is very convenient," as Adam Smith said of Oxford professors, "for the teachers, not for the pupils."

Schools must take a greater role in developing flexible programs at flexible time frames to deal with the real needs of the community. However, schools must be willing to say loudly what the cost will be, and what the alternatives are. Teachers cannot be parents, police officers, and social workers. A national debate is taking place regarding the roles of our schools. This, I believe, is healthy. There are many experiments taking place. Let me discuss a few:

1. Schools are providing placement services.
2. Various types of high school diplomas are now available.
3. Competency-based testing is entering the picture.
4. Community-education-work councils are being formed.
5. Flexible scheduling is being instituted.
6. Tuition tax credit is being proposed.

All of these represent atempts at dealing with the problem of transition, and now I get to the topic "What role can vocational education play in this transition?"

My own assessment of the education-work picture leads me to conclude that the proponents of both vocational and career education have been somewhat naive and, on occasion, unjust in their orientation. They have been naive in behaving as if proper skill training and an aggressive work attitude will lead to productive and satisfying employment and unfair in suggesting that the major problem lies with Americans who are either unwilling, or unable, to take or deal with the business of work and career. Without unduly belaboring the point, I take the position that, if we are to enhance payoffs between education and employment futures, it is essential to devote more time and effort to establishing a social system which is capable of absorbing workers and providing workers with conditions which will take advantage of the skills and motivations which these people bring into the work market.

We have talked about "building better bridges between the two worlds of education and work" as though we considered these reciprocal processes. Yet in fact, we have treated only education as a variable, as alone subject to adjust when the two processes appear to have gotten out of kilter. Work has been taken virtually as a given. So far, the bridge buiding has all been at one end. There is another approach—not alternative, but complementary. It involves giving as much attention to the work as to the education elements of education-work policy.

The policies and programs which have been employed in the past decade have been concerned almost totally with supply. Vocational education and manpower programs have had a singular goal—the transmission of worker skills to those seeking to enter or reenter the work force. The preoccupation with creating a labor supply is always accompanied by the assumption that jobs exist and that vocational education's major role is jobs.

The field of vocational education can make a major contribution to the transition process because it has had more experience than other areas of education. Vocational education always has been evaluated, at least partly on job placement. Good vocational education schools are constantly in contact with business and industry. There are national, state, and local advisory councils with business representative members. There are craft committees which are part of most vocational education programs. Youth groups in vocational education maintain close ties with business. There are also co-op and work-study programs.

Vocational education can do the best job of training possible, but if jobs don't exist, vocational education cannot be blamed for that. I believe that the systems currently in existence can provide the skills, but that is not where the problem lies.

In addition to the concerns of economic development in America and how one moves from school to work, there are many other issues which could be discussed and certainly need to be researched for their implications for vocational education. For purposes of discussion today, I have attempted to categorize the issues under institutions with which vocational education has some sort of symbiotic relationship, i.e., Congress, industry, education. Obviously there are other ways of doing this, but I believe this will serve our purpose for the moment.

Discussions in Congress

Currently, many discussions are taking place in Congress, which will result in decisions affecting the future of vocational education, and vocational education in the future. Here are just a few:

1. The Humphrey-Hawkins Bill, which would make the government the employer of last resort
2. The merger of vocational education and manpower training
3. Whether or not there will be educational revenue-sharing
4. The extent to which Congress finances vocational education
5. The extent to which Congress encourages and supports career education
6. Whether or not Congress will fund industry directly to conduct training programs

7. The level at which the federal government should encourage skill training—secondary or postsecondary

8. The relationship between vocational education and CETA

9. Whether or not Congress passes the tuition tax credit legislation

10. Whether or not a new Department of Education is established, and where vocational education will fit in this new structure

11. The impact of the current trend to cut property taxes

Discussions in Industry

1. How specific should be the training before one hires an employee?

2. Should industry take on the major responsibility for skill training?

3. Who should pay for training: the corporation, the employee, the union, government?

4. Can private industry provide sufficient jobs for all who want to work?

Discussions in Education

1. Who should receive a vocational education?

2. In what type of setting should vocational training occur: comprehensive high school, area vocational schools, community colleges?

3. What effect will career education have on vocational education and academic education?

4. What is the role of the guidance counselor in terms of the vocational education student?

5. What will the impact of multiple high school diplomas be?

6. What will the impact of competency-based testing be?

7. What will be the impact on the educational system when those who were part of the post-war baby boom, now in their late 'teens, reach adulthood?

8. How should education be governed?

9. How can more women be included in nontraditional job training programs, and what will be the impact?

These are just a few of the questions currently being discussed. Collectively, the solutions reached will determine vocational education in the future. Some of the certainties seem to be as follows.

1. There will be an increased need for vocational training during the 1980s.

2. The need for vocational training at the postsecondary level will continue to increase.

3. Career education in the grades will produce a secondary and postsecondary student who is more sophisticated about the world of work.

4. Skill training will increasingly need to produce a more flexible individual if he or she is to survive in the labor market.

5. Increasingly the aged will request to be trained and retrained for new careers.

Implications for Vocational Education Research

What is the implication of all of this for vocational education research? I believe that Congress and the public are asking the following questions of vocational education.

1. What economic impact does vocational education have?

   - What is its impact on unemployment?
   - Can vocational education produce the skilled person-power needed to maintain our industrial leadership?
   - What impact, if any, does a good vocational education program have on economic development in a community?
   - Is the institution of vocational education flexible enough to deal with modern demands of open-entry, open-exit requests, women demanding training equal to men, minorities who want to be included in the more technical training areas?

2. Does the training that one receives in vocational education make for a smoother transition from school to work?

   - Do vocational education students get jobs more quickly than academic students?
   - Is there a lower drop-out rate for vocational education students?
   - Does private sector cooperation make a difference in problems of school-to-work transition?

3. How well are the current vocational education programs doing?

   - What is the real enrollment?
   - How well are students being trained?
   - Are minorities and women being included at all levels?
   - Who is involved in the vocational education decision-making processes?

- Do current programs relate to the labor market needs of today and tomorrow?

- Are current programs cost-effective?

4. Can vocational education help solve problems relating to welfare,crime, health, urban and rural development.

All of these questions, I feel sure, will be asked at the hearings in 1981 when the vocational education legislation comes up for renewal. At the state and local levels these questions will be asked as budget requests are presented at various times. We must be prepared to respond with hard, well researched data. The public is demanding that each dollar be justified, and education is no exception. We must either be prepared to respond or to accept the results of decreased funding.

I also believe that we should not wait until the questions are asked to respond. We must take a leadership position in informing the public about the role of vocational education in our society and noting its accomplishments and disappointments. We must also raise the hard questions regarding funding priorities, successful vs. unsuccessful programs, and how this can be determined, and discuss the difficulties and costs involved in serving special populations. We must certainly participate in the national debates regarding the social problems of our time. In the past we have not seemed interested and hence we are not seen by the public as having any contribution to make. I believe that we have.

I am certainly aware of the funding problems. Many of you are thinking: All of this is nice and I agree, but where is the money to come from? I believe that pressure must be put on USOE to make funds available for such purposes. If you deal with the broader issues you may find foundations and other government agencies more interested in vocational education research than in the past.

I would hope that the National Center would take a leadership role in refocusing the research needs. Vocational education research must be seen by all of society as the cutting edge of the national problems. Education has the expertise but it must be made more relevant. It is up to you to provide the policy makers with the information that they need to make valid and realistic decisions. I believe that you are up to the task or I wouldn't be here. The problems are extremely complex, but the alternative—that of looking solely at the internal system of vocational education—will lead to having decisions made by those without reliable information. How many more GAO reports do we want?

Thank you.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question: What is the impact of the recent "Bakke decision" on vocational education? Will this mean fewer jobs for minorities and members of other subpopulations?

I think it will generate many more questions. I've read the decision at least sixteen times, and I'm still not sure what it says. At a black caucus meeting last night, we asked two lawyers from the Supreme Court what it meant. They said that, essentially, the Supreme Court punted. It said that an institution that is smart enough to write its policy language so that it doesn't use the word "quota," can include race as a factor for enrollment. I was talking to someone from George Washington University. George Washington University has a very shrewd system in its law school. Actually they say they have two systems. One includes a group of 400 students who are selected on a variety of criteria. The other includes a group of forty-five students who are called "special enrollment" students. When persons apply to the school, they are applying to be part of the 400 slots. Because the 400 students would not increase or decrease, officials say this sytem is legal.

Essentially, on the Bakke case, the Supreme Court said that because the University of California-Davis used a quota system, the decision was made to admit Bakke. It also said that this is a narrow interpretation. I'm sure this decision will prompt more court cases.

As far as industries are concerned, I think they will be a bit hesitant about moving until they know more about the decision and exactly what it means.

Question: What can vocational education do to decrease unemployment?

One of the things that has bothered me in the years I have been with the Council is that, up until last year, vocational education hadn't been involved in economic development on a broad basis. I can think of isolated cases—one in North Carolina and in other areas of the South. But I've asked vocational education directors in the North if they know the director of economic development for their state or city, and many don't know who it is. Many vocational educators have the attitude that their job is strictly to train people for jobs. I think we've got to become more involved with economic development.

The prime example I can think of for getting involved happened in North Carolina. The company of Bausch and Loeb, which sells eye glasses, told the state director of vocational education that if he could train 350 lens grinders in a year, the company would build a factory in the area. That's exactly what happened. The lens grinders were trained and the factory was built. I can think of a number of situations where these kinds of activities could take place.

I think vocational education must get involved. Economic development is not "someone else's job." When national economic policy is discussed, nobody thinks about even talking to vocational educators or inviting them to participate. The leaders in vocational education should sit in when those in the White House talk about economic policy. Many people are being trained through vocational education, and they should be linked to something. We are beginning to move into that direction. But it will be a while before those concerned with the economic development policy automatically think of vocational educators as people to talk to for opinions.

Question: How can we be sure that the cost of living won't rise to the point that no one will want to pay for training students for jobs?

I think this depends on the extent to which vocational educators communicate to the policy makers: (1) the job that vocational education is doing, and (2) the importance of vocational education to the economic development of the country. I'm convinced that if it is proven that vocational education is important to economic development, no one will want to cut off the skilled workers. We've got to develop hard data to show that vocational education does have an impact. Right now hard data do not exist. Most policy makers are not researchers. Someone must show the policy makers data on vocational education in each state, in each community, and so on. I think people in this country have reached the point where they feel money must not be spent unless good reasons exist for spending it. I think it's going to be very popular in the next few years to vote against any kind of expenditure. We've got to do a good job of selling what we do. We've also got to be critical of ourselves and "brush up" in areas in which we aren't doing well.

Question: What are the latest developments with YEDPA programs?

The YEDPA programs are getting off the ground. With the short duration of these programs, it will be hard to show a really major impact. I think it will be important that good writers write progress reports on the programs for Congress.

Question: How can we improve the negative image of vocational education that many minorities and subpopulations have?

First of all, good vocational education programs must exist in the inner cities where many minorities live. Many existing programs are poor. Additionally, we must communicate to people the status of vocational education in 1978, not what it was in 1948. Many leaders think of vocational education as being what it was when they were in school. When I was in school, vocational education was the last program I thought about going into because it was a different world from the current vocational education programs. We need to communicate what vocational education programs are. Many people today enroll in the Fashion Institute of Technology. Yet they probably don't think of fashion as being part of vocational education. Most people think of vocational education as just consisting of courses such as auto mechanics. We need to show the diversity of courses available. In addition, we need to talk about money. There is nothing wrong with telling students the salaries they will make after they complete a certain program. We don't talk about money very often. It's almost as if we are supposed to learn skills for other reasons.

I also think we need to talk to minority leaders about vocational education. These are the people that are listened to. If Jesse Jackson says vocational education is good, a lot of people will buy it. If he says it is bad, people will listen to that too. I believe more minorities are getting interested in vocational education than five years ago. Five years ago I was looked down upon by many because I was in vocational education.

Question: What is the representation of women and minorities on the National Advisory Council on Vocational Education?

There is one black, one black female, one Mexican-American female, and a total of about seven or eight women out of nineteen members. I don't think there have been more than three minorities represented on the council at one time. The situation is much worse than that on some state councils I have seen.

Question: What problems do you see with the alternative high school diploma and the competency-based testing programs?

The problem I have with both of these is that the programs happen too late. Why wait until graduation to give a competency test? It's too late to do anything about it. I'm not against competency-based testing, but I think it has to be conducted at certain steps along the way. People shouldn't have to wait until they graduate to be told they haven't learned anything in the past two years.

On the alternative high school diploma program, I think the major problem is that the blame is placed on the student. How can we say that one person went through high school and learned something and another person went and learned nothing? It's as though we're saying to the student, "You didn't learn anything, so it's your fault. Therefore, I'm going to give you a diploma for everybody to see for the rest of your life that says you went to this institution for four years and didn't learn a thing." I think we need to catch the student along the way and say, "Look, you may be in the wrong area" or "You really ought to focus on this . . ." I also think some pressure ought to be put on the schools so that they have an obligation to teach people something. I think school funding should be based on how well a school does. We could say, "For every one of the alternative diplomas you give, your funds will be cut so much."

Question: Could you discuss the two concepts of career centers and area vocational-technical schools?

I think students that come out of these will have to be more flexible. Some auto mechanics courses teach skills that can transfer to many jobs; others just teach how to screw in a spark plug. Students should receive more theory. If students have a basic understanding of physics and the laws of physics, they can transfer to various jobs.

Additionally, I think students need to learn about economic development and about how unions work, for example. Vocational education curricula need to be flexible and broad. I think vocational schools should introduce languages as options. A person who speaks a foreign language and has vocational education training can make more money overseas then he or she can make in the states. I think relationships could be worked out between vocational education schools and four-year colleges. There also ought to be a way of getting credit for these additional courses, whether it comes from a four-year school that's part of the two-year program or whatever. I don't think we can afford to keep producing people who are taught narrowly in many areas.